

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SL

SUBJECT:AMBASSADOR TURAY CALLS ON HA

1. AMBASSADOR TURAY MET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN SEPTEMBER 1, AT HIS REQUEST, FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. CITING DESIRE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. POLICY, TURAY ASKED WHETHER USG WAS CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC RIGHTS AS WELL AS CIVIL LIBERTIES.

2. MS. DERIAN EXPLAINED THAT U.S. POLICY WAS FOUNDED ON UN HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION, AND DID NOT REPRESENT OUR OWN UNILATERAL PERCEPTIONS. OUR COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WAS SPELLED OUT IN NUMEROUS PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS, COPIES OF WHICH WERE PROVIDED TO THE AMBASSADOR. PL-480, SUPPORT FOR INCREASED FOOD PRODUCTION, AND PUBLIC HEALTH ARE KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR ASSISTANCE.

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3. MS. DERIAN CONTINUED THAT DESPITE OUR NATIONAL WEALTH, THERE ARE LIMITATIONS ON OUR FUNDS, GIVEN THE MANY DEMANDS UPON THEM. WE THEREFORE HAVE TO BE SELECTIVE IN RESPONDING TO AID REQUESTS THAT TAKEN TOGETHER FAR EXCEED THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO US. THE HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE, ACROSS THE BOARD, OF NATIONS RECEIVING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WILL AFFECT THE ALLOCATION OF OUR SCARCE RESOURCES. THIS

IS A CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENT AS WELL AS AN EXPRESS
PRESIDENTIAL POLICY.

4. SIERRA LEONE'S TRADITION OF AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY
AND FREE, IF SOMETIMES TURBULENT, POLITICAL LIFE HAVE
GAINED OUR ADMIRATION. MS. DERIAN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT
THE NEW ONE-PARTY SYSTEM MIGHT BE A STEP BACK. TURAY
CLAIMED THAT THE ONE PARTY CONSTITUTION WAS VIGOROUSLY
DEBATED BEFORE ADOPTION, AND MENTIONED THAT OPPOSITION
LEADERS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO SENIOR POSITIONS IN THE
GOVERNMENT. HE HOPES THAT PARLIAMENT WILL SERVE AS THE
PRIMARY INSTRUMENT FOR THE EXPRESSION OF DISSENT, WHILE
ACKNOWLEDGING THE DANGER OF AN ATTEMPT BY OFFICEHOLDERS
TO SECURE A MONOPOLY OF POWER. THE NEW SYSTEM IS
EXPERIMENTAL AND SUSCEPTIBLE TO PERFECTION; THE OLD
CLEARLY WAS FRACTIOUS AND DIVISIVE.

5. AFTER LEAVING MS. DERIAN'S OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OFFICERS
EXPRESSED TO TURAY THEIR SATISFACTION AT THE RECENT
RELEASE OF POLITICAL DETAINEES.

6. COMMENT: DUE TO TURAY'S LATE ARRIVAL FOR THE MEETING
AND MS. DERIAN'S LATER COMMITMENT, THE CONVERSATION WAS
SOMEWHAT ABBREVIATED. MS. DERIAN INVITED THE AMBASSADOR
TO MEET WITH HER AGAIN TO CONTINUE THEIR EXCHANGE. CHRISTOPHER

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